

18. (New) A cell according to Claim 15, wherein the hydrocolloid is alginic, Na-alginic, low-methoxy pectin (LMP), κ -carrageenan or ι -carrageenan.
19. (New) A cell according to Claim 15, wherein the cell is a *Xenopus laevis* egg and embryos.
20. (New) A cell according to Claim 18, wherein the alginic has a mannuronic acid (M) content of from about 29 to about 61 %.

Attached hereto please find a "Marked-Up version of the Claims as Amended" including the amendments made to claims 1, 3-8 and 11-15 above as well as new claims 16-20 added above.

In addition, also attached hereto, please find an "Un-Marked Version of the Claims as Amended" including the amendments made to claims 1, 3-8 and 11-15 above as well as new claims 16-20 added above. Please note, additions to the claims are denoted by underlining and deletions from the claims are denoted by bracketing.

REMARKS

It is respectfully requested that the replacement of substitute sheets of Figures made pursuant to Rule 26 under Article 34 in response to the International Preliminary Examination Report be entered for purposes of the present application.

Claims 1, 3-8 and 11-15 have been amended to correct minor inconsistencies, to more clearly define the invention and to remove multiple dependencies in order to reduce the filing fee. New claims 16-20 have been added which are commensurate in scope with original claims 1-15 and which are fully supported by the written description.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Encls.

- Marked-Up Version of the Claims as Amended
- Un-Marked Version of the Claims as Amended

Un-Marked Version of the Claims as Amended

919.1002

Sub B1

1. (Amended) A method of coating a cell comprising the steps of:
placing the cell in a solution of hydrocolloid;
removing the cell from the solution of hydrocolloid; and
placing the cell in a cross-linking solution after removing the cell from the solution of hydrocolloid, thereby providing the cell with a thin coating of the hydrocolloid.

Sub A1

3. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is Na-alginate.

Sub B2

4. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is low-methoxy pectin (LMP).

A2

5. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is κ -carrageenan or λ -carrageenan.

6. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid solution is in Calcium Adjusted Modified Marc's Ringer (CAMMR) solution.

7. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the cell is a *Xenopus laevis* egg and embryos.

a2
cnt

8. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the cross-linking solution is a solution of Ca, Ba or K ions.

b1
b3

11. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said thin layer coating of hydrocolloid is up to about 50 μm in thickness.

b1
b3

12. (Amended) A method of postponing hatching of *Xenopus laevis* embryos comprising the steps of:
applying a thin coating of a hydrocolloid to a *Xenopus laevis* egg; and
cross-linking said hydrocolloid.

a2
a3
a4

13. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the alginate has a high mannuronic acid (M) content.

14. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 13 wherein the mannuronic acid (M) content of the alginate is from about 29 to about 61 %.

15. (Amended) A cell having a thin coating of a hydrocolloid.

16. (New) A method as defined in Claim 12, wherein the hydrocolloid is an alginate.

a4

17. (New) A method as defined in Claim 12 wherein the alginate has a high

mannuronic acid (M) content.

18. (New) A cell according to Claim 15, wherein the hydrocolloid is alginate, Na-alginate, low-methoxy pectin (LMP), κ -carrageenan or ι -carrageenan.

Sur B1
a 4

19. (New) A cell according to Claim 15, wherein the cell is a *Xenopus laevis* egg and embryos.

20. (New) A cell according to Claim 18, wherein the alginate has a mannuronic acid (M) content of from about 29 to about 61%.

Marked-Up Version of the Claims as Amended

919.1002

1. (Amended) A method of coating a cell [characterised in that] comprising the steps of:

placing the cell [is placed] in a solution of hydrocolloid [and, after];
removing the cell from the solution of hydrocolloid [solution, is placed]; and
placing the cell in a cross-linking solution after removing the cell from the solution of
hydrocolloid, [to] thereby [provide] providing the cell with a thin coating of the hydrocolloid.

3. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the [alginate] hydrocolloid is Na-alginate.

4. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hyrocolloid is [LMP] low-methoxy pectin (LMP).

5. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is [selected among] κ -carrageenan or ι -carrageenan.

6. (Amended) A method as defined [in any of Claims 1 to 5, characterised in that] Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid solution is in [CAMMR] Calcium Adjusted Modified Marc's Ringer (CAMMR) solution.

7. (Amended) A method as defined [in any of Claims 1 to 6] in Claim 1, wherein

the cell is a [Xenopus laevis] Xenopus laevis egg and embryos.

8. (Amended) A method as defined in [any of Claims 1 to 7] Claim 1, wherein the cross-linking solution is a solution of Ca, Ba or K ions.

11. A method as defined in [any of Claims 1 to 10] Claim 1, wherein said thin layer coating of hydrocolloid is up to about 50 μm in thickness.

12. (Amended) A method of postponing hatching of [Xenopus laevis] Xenopus laevis embryos comprising the steps of

applying a thin coating of [an] a hydrocolloid to a [Xenopus laevis] Xenopus laevis egg;
and
cross-linking said hydrocolloid.

13. (Amended) A method as defined in [any of Claims 1 to 3 and 6 to 12] Claim 1, wherein the alginate has a high [M] mannuronic acid (M) content.

14. (Amended) A method as defined in Claim 13 wherein the [M] mannuronic acid (M) content of the alginate is from about 29 to about 61 %.

15. (Amended) A cell having a thin coating of a hydrocolloid [according to any of the Claims 1 to 14].

16. (New) A method as defined in Claim 12, wherein the hydrocolloid is an alginate.

17. (New) A method as defined in Claim 12 wherein the alginate has a high mannuronic acid (M) content.

18. (New) A cell according to Claim 15, wherein the hydrocolloid is alginate, Na-alginate, low-methoxy pectin (LMP), κ -carrageenan or ι -carrageenan.

19. (New) A cell according to Claim 15, wherein the cell is a *Xenopus laevis* egg and embryos.

20. (New) A cell according to Claim 18, wherein the alginate has a mannuronic acid (M) content of from about 29 to about 61 %.